

From lab to market

European public research organisations join forces on technology transfer to power innovation

The Joint Research Centre (JRC) and the Commissariat à l'énergie atomique et aux énergies alternatives (Cea) were the final signatories of a Memorandum of Understanding within the European TTO Circle, a network of the technology transfer offices of 21 of the largest public research organisations in Europe. The signature marks the official launch of the European TTO Circle, an initiative of the JRC with the overall aim to strengthen Europe's ability to create innovative products and services for the market.

Although Europe has no shortage of potential, as a home to world leading researchers, entrepreneurs and companies, it must continue to strengthen its capacity to transform research results into

real innovation for its citizens. This is why innovation is at the heart of the Europe 2020 strategy for growth and jobs, which aims at making the EU a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy.

Dominique Ristori, General Director of the JRC, said: "I am convinced that the TTO Circle will make a significant contribution to the valorisation of Europe's innovation potential. The cooperation spirit of this network should become a model for other innovation actors in Europe, so that together we can face the challenge of creating the conditions for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth for our economy".

The European TTO Circle partnering organisations have agreed to join forces on technology trans-

fer to boost innovation in Europe through a set of initiatives, including: sharing best practices, knowledge and expertise; performing joint activities; establishing informal channels of communication with policymakers; organising training programmes; and developing a common approach towards international standards for the professionalization of technology transfer.

The initial 20 partners of the JRC come from 13 countries and employ in total around 115.000 staff: CEA, Inria (France); CNR, Enea (Italy); Fraunhofer Society, Helmholtz Association (Germany); Imec (Belgium); NCBI (Poland); Nerc representing the Research Councils UK (UK); Rise (Sweden); Sintef (Norway);

Tecnalia (Spain); TNO (The Netherlands); VTT (Finland); Cern, Esa, ESRF, ILL (European Union), ETH Board (Switzerland); Tubitak (Turkey). The signature ceremony took place at the Town Hall of Grenoble under the patronage of the municipality.

European technology transfer today shows similarities with an emerging industry: many valuable product ideas, a highly fragmented landscape, a lack of critical mass and wide disparities in terms of performances and developing practices. In line with the Innovation Union flagship initiative and these challenges, the JRC has launched the European TTO Circle to bring together the major European public research organisations. (C.)

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